

In the specification

Please substitute the following amended paragraph for the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 14):

After a layer of semiconductor material, such as a layer of dielectric or a layer of insulating material, has been deposited over a substrate, this ~~layers~~ layer has to be patterned and etched in order to selectively remove the layer and in so doing to create a desired pattern in the remaining layer of semiconductor material.

Please substitute the following amended paragraph for the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 1):

For this purpose, the layer is typically coated with a layer of photoresist, which is exposed through a photolithographic exposure mask over the surface of which a positive or negative image of the desired pattern has been created. ~~The in~~ In this manner, the created photoresist mask exposes the surface of the underlying layer that must be removed and blocks the underlying layer where this layer is to remain in place. The underlying layer may for instance be a layer of metal such as aluminum, copper, tungsten or any semiconductor material that is typically used for the creation of device elements or for the creation of interconnecting elements thereof.

Please substitute the following amended paragraph for the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 1):

FIG. 6 shows elements of the exposure mask that have previously been shown in FIG. 4, in addition dummy patterns have been highlighted in the ~~useless surface are~~ unused surface area over the surface of the exposure mask.